13. Flood Relief and Reconstruction.—Her Highness' Government have just issued a comprehensive statement detailing the damage done by the floods of 1099 and the relief measures carried out by the Government and the people. The first appearance of the flood was on the 32nd Mithunam 1099 (15th July 1924) in the elevated taluks and it lasted in some places till about the 23rd Karkatakam. Places which previously were never subjected to floods were submerged. This was the highest recorded flood in the State in living memory, being five to ten feet higher than the level reached in 1057.

Immediately on receipt of information about the destitute condition of the poor people in the affected regions the Government distributed half a lakh of rupees in gratuitous relief. Public works were taken in hand as relief measures and at one time the daily number of refugees employed by the P. W. D. rose to 8,000 persons. The Central Flood Relief Committee, formed at Trivandrum, collected from voluntary subscriptions Rs. 75,000 and distributed it through the 175 *pakuthi* committees and 8 town committees which were organised. A sum of Rs. 72,625 under current land revenue due for 1100 was remitted and the collection of Rs. 90,617 was put off. People in the hilly taluks were allowed to cut bamboos and reeds without the prescribed fees and as many as 6,02,750 persons were granted such free passes. 2,419 special agricultural loans to the value of Rs. 2,85,620 were distributed through the agency of the Revenue Department, besides Rs. 2 lakhs distributed through the Central Co-operative Bank.

Mr. S. C. H. Robinson, who was appointed as Flood Relief and Reconstruction Special Officer, co-ordinated the activities of the various agencies doing relief work and spared no pains to relieve suffering and help the restoration of damages. It is the pleasing duty of the Government to record their high appreciation of his unsparing labours. Tahsildars and subordinate officers of all departments also did splendid service during those trying times. I would be failing in my duty if I do not, on behalf of Her Highness' Government, express grateful appreciation of the spirit of charity and self-sacrifice which all classes of the people, high and low, official and non-official, generously exhibited, and particularly the remarkably good work done by voluntary organisations like the Central Flood Relief Committee.

14. Forests.—The financial results of the year showed a slight improvement over those of the previous year, the net revenue being Rs. 5,92,096 against Rs. 5,70,911 realised in 1099. The Forest Department too suffered from the floods. Forest conservation and regeneration received equal attention with forest exploitation; and the rearing of teak plantations on the *taungya* system, through the agency of co-operative societies, has proved economical to the department and beneficial to the societies, which propose to take up as much as 735 acres in the Pattanamtitta taluk on lease during the current year. The development of the revenue from minor forest produce should receive more sustained attention at the hands of the department, as also the steady expansion of well-planned forest communications. The committee appointed for the inspection of Mannankandam in the Malayattur Reserve has submitted a report embodying proposals by which about 750 acres will be set free for paddy cultivation immediately and an equal area rendered available for the purpose, after improvement, besides providing access to about 36 square miles of land suitable for tea cultivation.

15. Agriculture.—The Department of Agriculture continued to do useful work as will be seen from its report, copies of which are before you. The season was on the whole favourable to agriculture; and the financial assistance rendered by the Government in the shape of loans and remission and postponement of taxes enabled the ryots to recover from the effects of the floods.

16. Industries.— The avowed policy of the Government is to develop cottage industries with a view to improving the economic condition of the average peasant by providing him with a subsidiary occupation; and of these, the weaving industry shows signs of expansion. A sum of Rs. 30,000 has been ear-marked in the Industries

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